

**Amendments to the claims:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, of claims in the application:

What is claimed is:

Claim 1. (currently amended)

A flexible elongated exercise device for use in the exercise of the human body, having variable resistance to bending in any direction including:

an elongated flexible thermoplastic tube having opposite ends and an interior surface defining a round section cavity, said tube being bendable in the shape of a semicircle without kinking,

a rod fitting loosely within said round section cavity and substantially coextensive with the length of said tube, said rod providing said exercise device with bending resistance and having a rectangular cross section shape with a major axis and a minor axis, said rod orienting itself to bend about said major axis in the direction in which said exercise device is bent in response to forces exerted against its edges by said interior surface of said tube and

a closure on each of said ends of said tube.

Claim 2. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said rod is made of one of a group of mixtures including a mixture of thermoplastic resin and longitudinally oriented continuous fibers and a mixture of thermoset resin and longitudinally oriented continuous fibers.

Claim 3. (original)

The exercise device of claim 2 wherein said longitudinally oriented continuous fibers are selected from the group consisting of type E glass fibers, type A glass fibers, type S-2 glass

fibers, Owens Corning 'Advantex' glass fibers, type AR glass fibers, carbon fibers, aramid fibers and polyester fibers.

Claim 4. (currently amended)

The exercise device of claim 1 wherein the exterior shape of the flexible elongated exercise device is essentially cylindrical.

Claim 5. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 in which the length of the flexible elongated exercise device is between 18 inches and 72 inches.

Claim 6. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said flexible tube has an outside diameter between  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch and 3 inches.

Claim 7. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 in wherein said rod has a percent volume fraction of fiber between 25% and 70%.

Claim 8. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said closure is an end cap.

Claim 9. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said rectangular cross section shape has rounded edges.

Claim 10. (previously presented)

The exercise device of claim 1 having a soft sleeve covering at least nearly the entire length of said tube.

Claim 11. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 and further comprising at least one additional rod fitting loosely in said tube, each additional rod being made of one of a group of mixtures including a mixture of thermoplastic resin and longitudinally oriented continuous fibers, a mixture of thermoset resin and longitudinally oriented continuous fibers, a thermoplastic resin containing no fibers and a thermoplastic resin with chopped fibers.

Claim 12. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 having at least one additional rod fitting loosely within and substantially coextensive with said tube, said additional rod having a rectangular cross section shape.

Claim 13. (original)

The exercise device of claim 12 having a thin strip thermoplastic interleaved between said rods.

Claim 14. (currently amended)

The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said interior surface defining said round section cavity of said flexible tube, when said tube is deformed by application of a force to each of its ends, will apply a pressure to the edges of said rod along part of the length of said rod to assist in orienting it within said tube so that it will bend around its major axis without the user needing to further change the orientation of said tube.

Claim 15. (original)

The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said rod is formed by a pultrusion process.

Claim 16. (cancelled)

Claim 17. (cancelled)

Claim 18. (canceled)

Claim 19. (new)

A flexible elongated exercise device for use in the exercise of the human body, having variable resistance to bending in any direction including:

an elongated flexible plastic tube having opposite ends and a round section cavity,  
a rod fitting loosely within said round section cavity and substantially coextensive with the length of said tube, said rod having a rectangular cross section shape,  
a lubricant in said cavity to facilitate rotational movement of said rod within said round section cavity of said tube and  
a closure on each of said ends of said tube.

Claim 20 (new)

A flexible elongated exercise device for use in the exercise of the human body, having variable resistance to bending in any direction including:

an elongated flexible plastic tube having opposite ends and a round section cavity,  
a rod fitting loosely within said round section cavity and substantially coextensive with the length of said tube, said rod having a rectangular cross section shape,  
at least one additional rod of round cross section fitting loosely within and substantially coextensive with said tube and  
a closure on each of said ends of said tube.